

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
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AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 01697

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EGEN, PEPR, FR, IV
SUBJ: PRESIDENT GISCARD'S VISIT TO THE IVORY COAST

REF: ABIDJAN 0417.

1. QUAI OFFICIALS ARE PLEASED WITH THE GISCARD VISIT TO THE IVORY COAST WHICH THEY CHARACTERIZE AS A GREAT SUCCESS. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY ARE QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL: FRENCH-IVORIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE EXCELLENT AND THE TWO PRESIDENTS LIKE AND RESPECT EACH OTHER. IN THIS CONTEXT THE FRENCH PLANNED THE VISIT AS A KIND OF FRENCH TRIBUTE TO HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND HIS SUCCESSFUL FORMULA FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT. SINCE THERE WERE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS, THE TWO DELEGATIONS DEALT SMOOTHLY WITH A
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NUMBER OF BILATERAL ISSUES OF A LARGELY TECHNICAL NATURE.

2. WE ENQUIRED WHAT PRESIDENT GISCARD HAD IN MIND IN HIS REFERENCE TO A EURO-AFRICAN PACT. WE WERE TOLD THAT THIS IS AN IDEA WHICH GOES BACK TO GISCARD'S JUNE 26 SPEECH AT THE TIME OF DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE.

IT WAS AN IDEA WHICH APPEALED TO HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND WAS CONSISTENT WITH HIS OWN IDEAS OF THE INTERWOVEN INTERESTS OF WESTERN EUROPE AND AFRICA. GISCARD ACCORDINGLY THOUGHT IT APPROPRIATE TO PROMOTE THE IDEA AGAIN DURING HIS VISIT TO THE IVORY COAST. (THE BRITISH EMBASSY HERE TELLS US THAT THE IDEA GOT A COOL EUROPEAN RESPONSE WHEN FIRST RAISED AND WAS, UNTIL NOW, PRESUMED A DEAD ISSUE.) IT IS SUPPOSEDLY TO BE RAISED BY GISCARD DURING THE NEXT EC SUMMIT THIS SPRING. THE IDEA OF A EURO-AFRICAN PACT HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN PRECISION, BUT INCLUDES THE CONCEPT OF THREE HELSINKI-LIKE "BASKETS" OF ISSUES: (1) ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL; (2) SECURITY, AND (3) CONTACTS BETWEEN PEOPLES, I.E., CULTURAL RELATIONS. THE DEVELOPMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE EURO-AFRICAN PACT WOULD BE COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM THE EXCEPTIONAL FUND WHICH GISCARD ALSO MENTIONED.

3. ACCORDING TO QUAI OFFICIALS GISCARD AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY HAD THREE TETE-A-TETE SESSIONS AND NO DETAILS OR EVEN COMPLETE LIST OF TOPICS COVERED HAS YET FILTERED DOWN TO THE WORKING LEVEL OF THE QUAI.

4. AS ANNOUNCED DURING THE COURSE OF THE VISIT TO ABIDJAN GISCARD WILL VISIT CONAKRY LATER IN THE YEAR. THAT VISIT WAS NEVER FORESEEN AS TAKING PLACE BEFORE
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THE IVORY COAST TRIP, BUT GISCARD CAUSED SOME CONFUSION DURING A LATE DECEMBER PRESS CONFERENCE WHEN HE REFERRED TO A VISIT TO GUINEA "EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR." THERE ARE MANY COMPLEX DETAILS TO BE WORKED OUT BEFORE GISCARD GOES TO GUINEA, BUT THE PRESENT TARGET DATE THE QUAI IS WORKING ON IS MID-MAY.

5. WE SUSPECT THAT MOST OF THE SUBJECTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE US SUCH AS SECURITY ASSISTANCE, FRENCH COOPERATION WITH THE WEST AFRICAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT AND THE IVORY COAST ROLE IN MEDIATING VARIOUS AFRICAN DISPUTES WERE DEALT WITH IN TETE-A-TETE OR RESTRICTED SESSIONS. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING UP WITH ELYSEE SOURCES AS WELL AS THE QUAI.
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